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THE CITY OF SALAMANCA.



APPEARANCE OF THE CITY FROM THE RIVER TORMES.

Few Spanish names are more familiar to Englishmen than Salamanca, connected as it is with one of the most brilliant victories of modern times. The reader will find an account of it in the *Saturday Magazine*, Vol. V., p. 5, and will doubtless peruse with interest a topographical notice of this ancient city.

Salamanca, the capital of the province of that name, is built in the form of an amphitheatre, on the banks of the river Tormes. It was anciently a Roman military station: a portion of the Roman wall which formerly surrounded the city is still standing, as well as a colossal bull, and several stones with inscriptions. The splendid bridge over the Tormes, which has a length of five hundred feet, and rests upon twenty-seven arches, is attributed to Trajan.

The city, from a distance, has a striking and picturesque appearance, which to a great extent is lost on a nearer approach. Mean, narrow, and half deserted streets, give it a gloomy air.

It has, however, some fine squares, with ornamental fountains, the principal of which is the Plaza Mayor, which is well described by the author of *A Year in Spain*.

Every Spanish town of any importance has its Plaza Mayor, situated in its centre, and forming a quadrangle more or less large, inclosed by uniform ranges of building, having a gallery or covered way, formed by a projection of their fronts, sustained by stone columns or pilasters; there is usually a fountain in the centre, with spouts for the watermen to fill their jars at, while the spacious basin into which the refuse of the water falls is the ordinary drinking-place of the cattle of the town, as of the passing muleteers, who take their way through it in journeying between places

whose connecting road intersects it. The open space around is commonly used as a market, while the covered piazza, upon which cafés, confectionaries, and the principal shops, ordinarily open, is the general resort of the town; where there is no regular amphitheatre, this is moreover the Plaza de Toros.

These plazas are almost always noble and imposing objects; of all that I have seen, however, that of Salamanca is by far the most so, being a sixth of a mile in circumference, with ninety arches, sustained on massive columns, and three rows of balconies above, corresponding to as many stories, while the rough tile roof, which is so great a defect in many of the finest buildings of Spain, is here entirely hidden from view by a heavy balustrade. Over each column is a medallion head of some Spanish king or hero, though all of these are now noseless. This mutilation is due to the revolutionary French, who, during their occupation of Salamanca, diligently defaced whatever came within their reach. One is shocked at the Vandalism, whose fury in the destruction of a fine work of art, could not even be disarmed by the effigy of a Cid, a Cortez, or a Bernardo. To give a more finished character to the whole, and break the effect of monotony, the middle of the north side of the square, which contain the apartments of the Ayuntamiento, is somewhat more elevated than the rest, and beautifully decorated with pilasters, busts, and medallions. To complete the idea of the place, the reader has only to conceive in addition, that at the angles of the square, and midway of each of the sides, the structure is pierced by strong arches, connecting the interior with the streets without, and giving admittance incessantly to the odd groups of men and animals that complete the picture of Spanish life, as beheld nowhere with better effect than in the Plaza of Salamanca.

As intimated in the above passage, this Plaza is the annual scene of the bull-feasts, which from the fierceness of the bulls, are said to be among the best in Spain. The

concourse of people from the neighbourhood is said to be immense. The Ayuntamiento causes the whole of the pavement of this vast area to be removed, and takes possession of all the surrounding balconies, which are let out to the public, the proprietors being deprived of them, unless they hire them themselves. If an individual refuse to give up his balcony, it is either taken possession of by the alcalde, or it is forcibly blocked up so as to obstruct the view of the spectacle.

Mr. Roscoe noticed in the neighbourhood of Salamanca, among the numerous herds which were feeding in the fields, those champions of the ring which supply the arena of the great towns and cities for leagues around. "Many who have seen them goaded into terrific fury by their cruel assailants would suppose these fine animals were naturally vindictive and ferocious, and are surprised to behold them quiet and gentle as the sheep themselves. They would seem only fierce and desperate in self-defence, and what animal is not? Men, it has been justly remarked, do not always wait for these powerful motives ere they delight in seeing the agonies of an irritated bull, or the fury of the tiger."

In visiting a town for the first time, the traveller has no better method of gaining a correct idea of it than by ascending some eminence, which commands a view of it and its vicinity. From the summit of the tower of the cathedral a magnificent view is obtained, commanding a radius of ten miles, and towards the east of more than thirty. "As far as the eye could distinguish, from Alva—where still stands the castle of the renowned duke of that name—till lost in the remote west, the Tormes sought its winding way, through fields of every various tint, though the bright green of the young wheat, prevailing almost everywhere, gave evidence of the favourite production of the most noted corn region of Spain. Discovering itself again in a succession of lake-like sheets, the river was either darkened by the ripple of a passing breeze, or shone a bright and unruffled mirror under the influence of a blazing sun. Not a cloud was anywhere to be seen, and the most distant objects, however minute—flocks of sheep, and herds of swine, wagons, trains of mules, and sweeping caravans—seemed distinct and near, as brought with telescopic clearness to the eye through the medium of this transparent atmosphere. In a few directions were seen clumps of trees, the absence of which is so universal a defect of Spanish scenery, but in general the plain spread itself in interminable and unbroken monotony. The banks of the Tormes near the city, devoted to the production of vegetables, offered the richest and most varied hues; indeed, throughout the whole course of the stream, its immediate banks, submitted to irrigation and skirted occasionally with trees, decked out the landscape with its fairest attractions.

"Having completed the survey of remoter objects, I contracted my delighted gaze to the nearer and more palpable object of the outspread city at my feet. More than half its surface was covered with public buildings—the colleges, convents, and churches of this great nursery of Spanish learning, and stronghold of the national faith; the singular magnificence of its edifices, when thus contemplated together, is indeed astounding, and it is with no vain or unfounded boast that the Salamanguinos claim for their fair city the appellation of Roma la Chica [Little Rome].

"From this point one could properly estimate the vastness of the Gothic cathedral that lay below; next to it in conspicuously was the Jesuits' college, which covers an immense space, having at its front a grand temple, adorned by two lofty towers, while in the rear is a double row of edifices, surrounded by covered ways to serve as promenades, the roofs being sustained upon long series of arches, as in the Roman aqueducts. Hence, too, could be estimated the extent of the lamentable destruction occasioned by the resistance of the French during the siege, impressing the mind with a fearfully vivid picture of the terribleness of man's energy to destroy and cast down the proudest monuments of his power; the shattered walls of convents, built with the solidity of fortresses, yawning sections of unsupported naves, with the columns and arches of half-demolished cloisters, battered by cannon-shot, or blackened by sulphureous explosions, lay exposed to view with the freshness of recent demolition, impressing the mind with a combination of the gloomiest images."

The cathedral was commenced in 1513, and not

finished till 1734. Opinions, as usual, differ respecting its architectural merits: one writer describes it as a stupendous specimen of modern Gothic; while Mr. Roscoe says, "Though erected in the Augustan age of the arts of Italy, it would be pronounced a huge, ill-assorted, and unmeaning pile, instead of exciting the mistaken admiration of travellers, were it not for the boldness of its nave; the splendour and elaborate ornament of its decorations, assisted by gorgeous show and the pomp of its public worship. But the effect of the interior view, the broad-spreading aisles, the profuse and exquisitely finished ornaments, the deep sombre light, the loud thrilling music of its admirable choir, especially during the Holy Week, leave you little wish to criticize its exterior beauty, or the want of exact symmetry in its parts. It is still a magnificent structure, not unworthy this ancient seat of learning and the arts."

In the neighbourhood of the cathedral is a very remarkable Gothic building of the twelfth century, containing many monuments of interest. In one of its chapels mass is still said according to the Muzarabic ritual.

In addition to these there are twenty-five parish churches in Salamanca: there are also thirty monasteries of both sexes, now shut up. The convent of St. Dominic is a beautiful and magnificent building. "Here was debated the grand question—a curious one for the sages and doctors of Salamanca—as to the existence of another world, at least in the western hemisphere, when the great Columbus was referred by the royal court to the wisdom of St. Dominic for the reception of his new theory; which accordingly pronounced that it was all moonshine—that the great discoverer had lapsed into a dangerous and egregious error."

Perhaps the most interesting institution in this city is its University, which, during the middle ages, was celebrated as one of the first in Europe. At one time not fewer than twelve thousand students congregated within its halls, and its opinion was sought by councils, popes, and sovereigns. It was founded in 1200, by Alfonso the Ninth, of Leon, and extended in 1239, by his successor Alfonso the Tenth, surnamed El Sabio, (the Learned,) under whose auspices the science of astronomy made considerable advances. The university continued in high repute till the reign of Philip the Third, attracting numerous students from Spain and Portugal, from France, Italy, England, and even from Spanish America. It possessed sixty-one professorships, and a college for the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin languages. The Aristotelian philosophy held a high rank in the branches of ancient learning. During the seventeenth century the bright rays of the Baconian philosophy, which to other nations illuminated the paths of science, shed no lustre in the university of Salamanca; consequently the number of its students rapidly decreased with its declining reputation, and at present the number does not exceed one thousand five hundred. The following particulars respecting the present state and condition of this celebrated seminary are chiefly on the authority of the author of *A Year in Spain, and Spain Revisited*.

The students who resort to this university can read and write, and are for the most part acquainted with Latin; but this is the usual limit of their acquirements. In order to obtain the degree of Bachelor, the student is obliged to follow, during three years, the course of philosophy, which includes ethics and mathematics: he may also, if he pleases, attend the lectures on physics, astronomy, and other useful branches of knowledge, of which there are chairs in the university; but skill in science is not necessary to take out the degree. It follows that very few students attend these courses, and in many instances the lecturer has only to acquit himself of his daily duty by going to the amphitheatre, taking his station in the pulpit, and waiting the stipulated time to see if any accident should send him listeners.

Having received the degree of bachelor it is necessary to follow the courses of theology, law, or medicine, in order to obtain the degree of Licentiate in any one of these faculties, and before acquiring either degree it is necessary to undergo an examination, and produce certificates of regular attendance from the various professors. The graduate is, moreover, to defend satisfactorily a certain thesis in Latin against all disputants. The students, from constant practice, converse and dispute in Latin with great fluency.

Never was the line of distinction between rich and poor more strongly marked than in this university. The rich in all countries are more or less alike, but poverty is constrained by peculiarities of place, climate, and institutions, to assume forms which usually give character and identity, and are distinguishing marks to every observer. Thus the aristocratic student of Salamanca is known by his costly dress, his courtly manners, and his exclusiveness; but how can we describe the dress of the poor student! "A pair of one-legged trowsers, a garment to which courtesy concedes the name of cloak, a torn and foxy cocked hat, a wooden spoon in readiness for soup, and a pack of greasy cards, wherewith to gamble and cheat." A collection of these worthies is thus described:—"Squalid in their dress, starved in their appearance, and cringing in their manners, the plebeian students, heedless of the dignity of learning, cultivate the acquaintance of the inferior classes of townspeople; others stood apart meditating mischief, which the humility of their attire might seem to justify, dressed as they were in tattered cloaks, faded to every possible shade of discoloration, and their meagre faces bearing an expression of premature ingenuity, imparted by the difficulty of existing, and the cunning that was necessary to succeed."

Some of the poor students serve as domestics in the houses of the more opulent professors or ecclesiastics; others prefer liberty, eating as they may at the doors of convents, where they attend the stated distribution of soup. They are called *sopistas*, and are in general a disreputable set, secure themselves, having nothing to lose, from plunder or misfortune.

The temptation to this sort of life is the chance of securing something from the humble walks of church patronage, and the prospect of gaining admission to a convent, where, deprived of no gratification, the charms of a life of idleness repay the privations of the student. When it is considered that many of the working clergy of Spain have qualified themselves for the cure of souls by passing through a course of life such as this, we cannot wonder at the present low state of the Spanish population, already demoralized by civil war.

Twenty-five private colleges are attached to this university, besides four collegios mayores, or superior colleges, so called from their being designed for the children of the nobility. Among these is the Collegio del Arzobispo, where proofs of nobility are demanded from the candidate through many generations, on both sides.

Some of the private colleges are richly endowed: their students are known in the university as "collegians;" they reside in their respective colleges under the care and observation of a rector.

Perhaps the most interesting of these institutions is the Irish College. The Roman Catholic clergy of Ireland were formerly accustomed to seek their education in foreign countries, where they possessed colleges of their nation connected with universities of note. Such institutions have long been established in Paris, Valladolid, and Salamanca. The last, owing to the superior character of its university as a school of divinity, has long been celebrated. But since, by the establishment of the College of Maynooth, a Government provision has been made for the education of the clergy, this institution of Salamanca has ceased to attract students from Ireland, although about a dozen scholars still

resort there to enjoy the advantages of the divinity lectures of the university, and they are supported by the endowments of the college, which originated chiefly in the benefactions of noble Irishmen who entered the service of Spain on the downfall of the Stuarts, and who, rising to rank and distinction in their adopted country, thus evinced their attachment to that of their birth. According to Townsend, who visited Salamanca towards the close of the last century, this college received sixty students at a time from Ireland, the same number being returned home: they were required to come well grounded in the languages, and their course of education lasted eight years: during the first four they studied philosophy, and during the last four divinity; they rose every morning at half-past four, and had no vacations.

The library of the university is described as a magnificent room two hundred feet long by sixty wide, with an arched ceiling, through apertures in which the light is skilfully introduced from above, descending uniformly upon the page, in whatever part of the room the reader may be seated. The book-shelves of richly carved wood are arranged in a double gallery around the whole apartment, and at frequent intervals was hung out the fearful notification contained in a bull of the Pope, in which he denounces the sentence of excommunication against any sinner who should abstract, lose, or deface any book in that library, the sentence remaining for ever in force, until the moment of perfect restitution. In different positions along the centre of the room are massive tables, surrounded by commodious chairs for the use of the readers.

Next to the students, the beggars of Salamanca are celebrated. In walking through the town, the stranger is invariably besieged by groups of ingenious mendicants, who keep up a continuous exhibition of well-assumed infirmities, and incessant appeals to the saints.

In the education of facts, the great object is to make children observe and reflect; without this, previous acquisitions are but matters of rote, well enough as a means, but worthless as an end. They may be brought into frequent contact with instructive prints, interesting plants, minerals, animals, and the ordinary productions of human industry. The attention must not be distracted, or the memory fatigued, by too much variety; the great thing is to create a lively interest, and by judicious repetition and interrogation, to secure the retention of what has been learned. It is obviously better to bring things directly under the operation of the senses; description merely is a subsidiary process. The world around is full of wonders; every situation is replete with objects of interest. The metals with which our dwellings abound; their origin in the bowels of the earth; and their conversion by human skill into articles of ornament and utility; the transparent stone in the windows, the wood, and the materials from remote quarters of the globe; the varied stuffs, the stained paper, and the pitchy coal, that gives out light and heat, constitute a fund of copious instruction. Why not make the child acquainted with the names, uses, and structure, of everything that he sees; how contributions have been levied on all the kingdoms of nature, and how the Deity, through his infinite wisdom, goodness, and power, has furnished so many appliances for the promotion of human comfort and human happiness.—M'CORMAC.

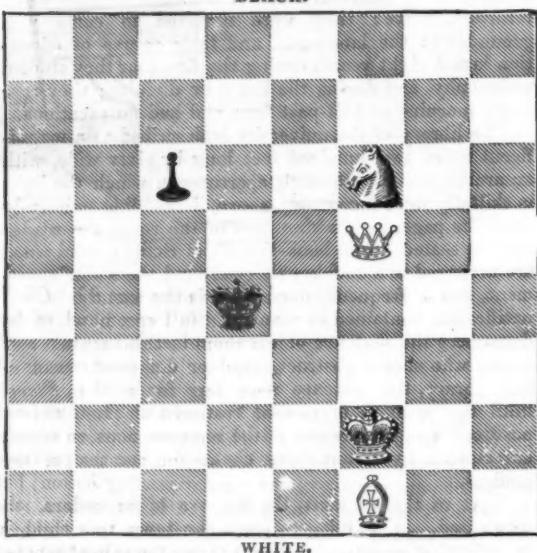
The characteristic difference between the school and the university seems to be this: In the first, we are learning our own position; in the second, we are learning how to act upon others; the first is intended to form man, the second is intended to form teachers. This distinction is tolerably well understood, and in the main is acted upon. Those who are intended for all active professions frequent the grammar school; those who are meant for professions which directly inform the mind of the country, frequent the university. But there is another distinction consequent upon this which I think is often overlooked: it is that the studies of the school are purely living studies, in which the student is the main object; the studies of the university are scientific, in which the study is the main object.—MAURICE on Education.

CURIOUS CHESS PROBLEMS.—XIV.

We have on several occasions given *difficult* problems in which two moves suffice for the solution: the following problem is equal in difficulty and ingenuity to any of the same class: it is from the recently published *Almanach für Freunde vom Schachspiel*, by Herr J. Bredé of Altona.

White moving first, is to checkmate in two moves.

BLACK.



INDIVIDUAL ENTERPRISE.

DAWSON was the son of a farmer in Berwickshire, where he was born in 1734. At the age of sixteen he proceeded to Norfolk, and other parts of England, to examine the best courses of husbandry, and store up for his own use whatever seemed likely to be introduced with advantage into his own country. Returning to Scotland, he commenced operations on the farm of Frogden in Roxburghshire, in the year 1759. Disregarding the evil anticipations of his friends and neighbours, he proceeded in his course, upon the rational plan of bringing his lands into the best possible condition. This he accomplished by the turnip husbandry, by the use of artificial grasses, then unknown in Scotland, and by the liberal use of lime, not for the purpose of scouring the soil by successive grain crops, but to obtain the means of bringing it advantageously into grass. His object was to support upon his lands a great number of cattle, and by means of them to enable a moderate proportion of the soil to bring forth a larger crop of grain than had formerly been done by the whole. Every man who, in our times, has attempted to improve an ill-cultivated and exhausted soil, must be sensible of the merit which attends success in such an enterprise; but in those days Mr. Dawson had to encounter difficulties which do not now exist. He had numerous prejudices to encounter; and it was nearly two years before he succeeded in training an expert ploughman, who was willing to follow out his plans. All difficulties are overcome by perseverance. Mr. Dawson's fields soon became more fertile and beautiful than those around him. This his neighbours might have overlooked, as they had disregarded the fertility produced by the costly efforts of certain enterprising land-proprietors; but as his conduct had become an object of minute attention, a more important point was speedily discovered—namely, that he was becoming a rich man. They now became eager to tread in his footsteps. Men who had been once in Mr. Dawson's service were always sure to find employment; his ploughmen were in the utmost request; they were transported to East Lothian and to Forfarshire, and everywhere spread the improved practice of agriculture. Roxburghshire, in the mean while, together with the adjoining county of Berwick, soon became the scene of the most active agricultural enterprises; and Mr. Dawson, independently of his own personal prosperity, had the satisfaction to live to see himself regarded and hear himself called the Father of the Agriculture of Scotland.—*Agriculture and Drill Husbandry.*

THE ART OF READING.

VII. DESCRIPTION OF THE PHONIC METHOD.

UNDER the Phonic System of Instruction, when properly carried out, the very process of teaching to read is calculated to arouse the attention of children, to cultivate a habit of observation, and to gratify that ardent curiosity, and that love of variety which, for the wisest purposes, have been implanted in the youthful mind. This system totally abolishes the spelling lesson, and, what is matter of grievous offence with many persons, it does not even require that the child should be able to say its alphabet. It is literally a lesson in *reading*; for no sooner has the child acquired a few simple sounds from pictures, than he is able to read at sight a little exercise prepared for him. This is not asserted from hearsay, or from the statements contained in books; it has been witnessed by the writer on several occasions.

Greater knowledge and tact are undoubtedly required in the teacher who adopts this system, than in one who begins with the alphabet and spelling-book; for it is a necessary part of the Phonic method that the teacher engage in conversation with his pupil, and be ready to draw out, by prompt and enlivening questions, the little store of information which his class may possess on the subject of each picture. Children when first sent to school are naturally timid and diffident, yet they are not altogether unaware of the powers they possess, and are pleased when they find an opportunity of using them. A good teacher will soon win them from their shyness, and gain their confidence and affection. It will be his aim not to depend on the mere memory of the child, but to call in the aid of familiar associations, and to keep that which is known in active use, as an indispensable means of searching for and discovering that which is unknown.

Teachers of reading on the Phonic method in Germany commence their instruction by exercises in speaking. Before any letters are set before the child, or sounds taught, before even a picture has been introduced, the teacher talks familiarly with his pupils, that he may observe their most common errors of pronunciation. These he contrives to bring into notice, by forming little sentences of the words mispronounced, and making all the children repeat them after him in a correct manner. Repeated trials will overcome the difficulty, which the children at first feel in giving the true sound to the words; and although it will be impossible to overcome, in the course of a few lessons, errors and provincialisms that have grown habitual, yet good is done by drawing attention to these faults of speech at the outset. The teacher then continues his conversations with another end in view. As he is shortly to teach reading on a method which relates especially to the *sounds* of the language, he is anxious to get his pupils to observe, that most of the words they use are made up of separate sounds. We give a familiar example of the sort of exercise which would be employed to teach this; but we must observe that such exercises are discretionary with the teacher, and do not form part of the prescribed course of instruction contained in the *Phonic Reading Books* lately published. Indeed, in many cases, it has been found impossible to interest English children in these conversational lessons, except in private teaching, where individuals can be more particularly addressed. To show a child that a word is made up of two or three sounds (a knowledge which is soon to be put in use) the teacher will perhaps talk somewhat in this fashion. *T.* Have you ever seen a blind man led about by a child, or by a little dog, or groping his way alone? *Ch.* I have seen blind Thomas; he walks about by himself. *T.* How does he walk? Quickly, as you and I do, or slowly as if he was afraid of falling? *Ch.* Slowly. *T.* Why? *Ch.* Because he cannot see where to go. *T.* He cannot

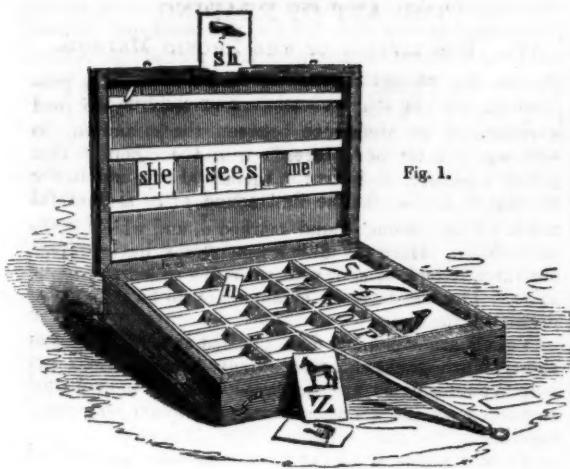


Fig. 1.

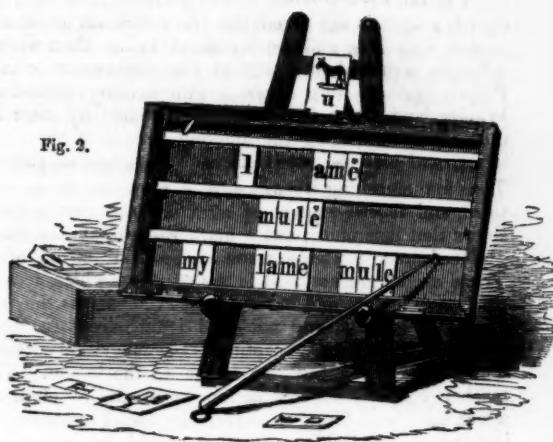


Fig. 2.

THE READING FRAME.

see. I want you to notice that word *see*. Repeat it after me more and more slowly. [Pupils repeat it until it becomes separated into two sounds.] *T.* Leave out the first sound, and what is left? *Ch.* ee. *T.* Right: now we will search for that sound ee in other words. One of your hymns tells you about a little insect that

— gathers honey all the day
From every opening flower.

What insect is that? *Ch.* The bee—the busy bee. *T.* Say that word slowly. [The children give the two sounds in it, not the names of the letters.] *T.* Leave out the first sound and what is left? *Ch.* ee. *T.* Now tell me the name of a game you all like to play at, where some of you hide yourselves, and the others try to find you? *Ch.* Hide and seek. *T.* Hide and—what did you say? *Ch.* Seek. *T.* Say it very slowly. Repeating this word with the children the teacher makes them notice three sounds, and tells them to leave out the last. There then remains “*see*,” and on their leaving out the first and last they once more get ee. *T.* Now, children, repeat the names of the days, beginning with Sunday. How many are they? *Ch.* Seven. *T.* What do those seven days make? One—*Ch.* Week. The teacher makes them separate these sounds also, and says—Take away the last sound. *Ch.* Wee. *T.* Take away first and last. *Ch.* ee. *T.* In how many words have we now found this sound of ee? *Ch.* In four—*see*, *bee*, *seek*, *week*. The teacher then touches one of his eyes, and says, What is the name of this part of my face? *Ch.* Eye. *T.* I want you all to sound that word distinctly and to remember it.—Right. Now I am not going to talk to you about the eye, nor to explain what a beautiful and useful organ it is. This we will talk about at another time: I only want you now to remember the sound, *eye*. Which of you has seen the water of a pond, or of a river, frozen quite hard in winter? *Ch.* I have. *T.* You did not call it *water* then, when it was so hard and firm; what did you call it? *Ch.* Ice. The teacher then proceeds as before, and the children find the sound *eye*, or *i*, at the commencement of this word. *T.* I dare say you know what those little creatures are called that get into the larder, and nibble the cheese, and the bacon, and the bread, whenever they can. *Ch.* Mice. *T.* Now let us separate the sounds in that word. They do so, and find three, the middle one of which is *i*. *T.* You would not like to eat the cheese which mice have nibbled, I dare say: it does not look ——. *Ch.* Nice. *T.* Let me hear that word again, and see if you can tell me how many sounds there are in it. The children have now been accustomed to search for several sounds in one word, and will probably do it without the teacher's aid. *T.* You have found the same sound in four different

words—*eye*, *ice*, *mice*, *nice*; what is the sound? *Ch.* I. When the teacher has attained a full command of his class, and can readily interest them in this manner, such preliminary exercises are undoubtedly a good means of preparing them for the first lessons in the *Phonic Reading-Book*, and the time bestowed on them will not be lost. In private tuition such conversations on sounds might be given occasionally, for several months previous to the commencement of the regular reading lesson; but in schools, especially those for the lower orders, the ability to read is of such great importance to a child, in preparing the way for, and supporting the other branches of instruction, that any considerable delay of the reading lessons must be avoided, and whatever preparatory exercise may be made use of must be given in a manner and at a time which shall not interfere with their early acquirement.

We have now to notice the course of regular lessons presented to the pupil under this method; these are given by the assistance of what is called a Reading-Frame. (Fig. 1.) This is an arranged cabinet, with numerous divisions for containing pictures and letters, and with a series of ledges or grooves, in which the letters (which are separately mounted on little boards,) may be made to slide easily. Several copies of each letter are contained in the cell appropriated to its use*. By means of these letters, &c., and with this arrangement, a whole class can be instructed, and from the facility with which the letters can be shifted, different combinations can easily be produced. The teacher's guide to the order in which the lessons are given is a small volume, called the *First Phonic Reading-Book*, which he can either keep at hand while giving the lesson, or (which is better), he can make himself master of, so as to have no hesitation in the course he is to adopt. The first lesson is devoted to the teaching of the simple vowel sounds, *a*, *e*, and *o*; but ere we describe the mode in which they are taught, we must allude to a difficulty which exists with respect to the English language, and which is very embarrassing to young children. There are numerous sounds in our language for which we have no sign or letter, so that one letter is frequently employed to represent several sounds. This is the case with the letter *a*, which has four distinct sounds, as we may observe in the words *fate*, *far*, *fall*, and *fan*. The letter *e* has two sounds, and *o* has four, *u* and *y* have three sounds, *i* two, and *c*, *g*, *s*, and *u* have also each two. Moreover it is a puzzling and capricious property of our language, that two or even three letters are sometimes

* The picture illustrative of the particular sound to be taught is set up between two notches at the top of the open cover. When it is deemed necessary to use an easel, the cover of the reading frame, by moving it a little to the left, can easily be shifted from its hinges, and placed in the required situation, as represented in Fig. 2.

used to signify the same sound. In the explanatory notes to the *First Phonic Reading-Book*, these facts are stated, and it is remarked that the circumstance of our modes of spelling and pronunciation being often widely different, would almost prevent the employment of the Phonic method, were it not for the license adopted by Walker, and which is claimed for this method, namely, that of distinguishing the different sounds of the same letter, and also the mute letters, by appropriate marks. Thus in the reading lessons $\overset{2}{a}$, $\overset{3}{a}$, $\overset{4}{a}$, represent the second, third, and fourth sounds of *a*; a circle \circ over a letter shows that it is mute; and a mark resembling the letter *e* placed over *y* shows when it has the sound of *e*. These marks are not used in the exercises which accompany each lesson, and in the lessons themselves they are gradually omitted, and not used again except in those words in which an exceptional pronunciation occurs. This being understood, we return to the lesson. The teacher conveys his instruction by means of pictures, which have been found so universally useful in conveying instruction to children, that it would be unwise to neglect their aid. The first picture is that of a hay-field, with labourers at work. The teacher asks such questions, and gives such explanations, respecting this department of rural labour, as are suitable to the capacities of his class, taking care not to weary them by saying too much. He then makes them repeat the word *hay* more and more slowly, until the two sounds in it are separated from each other. If they have had preparatory exercises, such as we have described, this process will be neither new nor difficult, and they will readily select the sound required. Perhaps it may be objected, that by giving children the picture of *hay*, in order to teach the sound of *a*, we lead them to the common error of dropping the sound of the *h*; but in practice the reverse of this is the case, and in the selection of the word *hay* it has not been overlooked that it would afford an opportunity of combating at the very outset, a fault in the speech of the lower orders which is almost universal. The very exercise they get in first giving the word its full and proper sound, and then separating it into two sounds, is more likely than anything else to correct the evil complained of. To persons who have never heard a lesson given on the Phonic method, it may appear impossible that young children can be made to separate sounds, or to utter peculiar "breathings" as they may be called, which constitute the real sounds of *h* and other consonants. Such persons are so possessed with the idea of the *name* of the letter, that they have no idea of the sound of *h* except *itch*; whereas, the real sound is merely a hard breathing. We recommend to those who are sceptical as to this mode of teaching, to seek admission to the School of Industry at Norwood, or the Village School at Battersea, and when they have witnessed the admirable results produced by the intelligent teachers of the Phonic method in those establishments, they will perceive advantages which, in writing on the subject, it is impossible fully to point out. When the sound of *a* is clearly given, the board on which the picture is mounted is turned, and on the other side the children perceive the same picture with the letter *a* under it. The sound they have just learnt is thus connected with its sign, and they are taught that the letter stands for that sound. A few more questions will help to fix this in their memories, and they are also required to point out this letter, as it may occur on the tablets on the walls of the room. The next picture is that of a door with a *bar* across it; and this, after some talk about the reason for barring or locking doors, the sin of theft, &c., leads to the second sound of *a*, as we hear it in *bar, far, &c.* The picture has beneath it the letter with a mark over it thus, $\overset{2}{a}$. This difference will be quite enough to the quick intelligence of a child, to recall the sound it is intended to remind him of. Some little children who knew nothing of figures,

readily gave the right sound to $\overset{2}{a}$ wherever they saw it, "because," as they said, "of the little mark over it;" and as $\overset{2}{a}$ and $\overset{4}{a}$ do not occur until a later part of the course, it was not thought necessary to trouble them with learning the figure, as such. The children are now exercised in the difference between the *a* and $\overset{2}{a}$. In this way the teacher proceeds with the other vowels, giving a picture of a bee for the sound of *e* and also of *ee*, that of a rose for the first sound of *o*, that of the moon for the second sound marked $\overset{3}{o}$, and which is the same as *oo*. Here the first lesson closes, having given the three letters, *a, e, o*, with their five sounds, *a, ah, e, o, oo*. The lesson is so arranged as to be capable of division if desirable.

Vowels are commonly distinguished as being long and short. Throughout the *First Phonic Reading-Book* the long vowel sounds are employed in conjunction with single consonant sounds; two consonants never come together in the same syllable. The short vowel sounds, and combinations of two or more consonant sounds, are reserved for the *Second* and *Third Reading-Books*.

The second lesson makes the class acquainted with the first long sounds of *i* and *u*. The sound of *i* is selected from the three sounds in *fire*, a picture of which is set up on the reading-frame, and while they are taught to recognise the sound of the letter *i*, they are also taught that *y* has the same sound. It must here be remarked, that all the lessons are at first given in small letters. It is not thought desirable to trouble the class with learning the capital letters at this early stage; the only exception being in the case of the pronoun *I*, which, necessarily, requires it. Somewhat later, when proper names are introduced, the capitals appear one at a time, and their use is pointed out without adding to the difficulty of the lesson. The letter *u* is taught in this lesson by means of a picture of a mule, and the questions and conversations conducted in the usual manner. As change of occupation often affords rest to active minds, the good teacher on this, or any other method, is always ingenious in affording variety to his pupils, and if he finds their attention flag, he causes them to perform a few simultaneous physical manoeuvres, or allows of some other short digression from the subject. By such means the pupils acquire renewed interest and freshness for their task. The long vowel sounds now being acquired, another lesson will introduce them to the sound of consonants as given by this method, and these we shall take another occasion of noticing.

THE KITCHEN GARDEN.

XI.

NOVEMBER.

Tuo' oft the shrouded welkin lowers
With murky clouds and dripping showers,
Yet wants there not a cheerful beam,
Now and again to shed a gleam
Of radiant gladness.—MANT'S *British Months*.

In this season of mists and gloom the gardener's toil is often suspended by the unfavourable state of the weather; but when the soil is in tolerable condition for working, there cannot be a greater economy of time than to use the present month (when little is to be done in the vegetable department,) for making various improvements in the garden itself. These will frequently suggest themselves to the attentive cultivator; but he finds no time to put them into execution while the routine crops, the fruit, the salads, &c., are occupying his notice; nor indeed would any season be so suitable as the present, since the soil would be too fully sown or planted at other times, to allow of any material alteration in the plan or details of the garden, except at the expense of the crops. According to the state of the case, and of the weather, the operations of digging

and trenching may now be carried on, and the soil fitted to greater productiveness another season. The method of trenching the ground was noticed in the opening article of this series, in January last, among other directions for the formation of a kitchen garden, and therefore need not further engage our attention.

Among the directions for the present month, the dressing of artichoke and asparagus beds must not be forgotten. The former of these vegetables is much less generally used in England than on the Continent; but still it is sufficiently well known to make some notice of it desirable here. *Cynara*, the botanical name of the artichoke, is derived from *cinere*, according to Columella, because the ground in which it was planted was manured with ashes; or as it is otherwise thought, because the leaves are ash-coloured. The word *choke* is no doubt derived from that part of the head which is left after the bottom part of the scales is eaten, and which produces a choking sensation, if accidentally swallowed. The artichoke is a native of Africa, and of many of the warmer portions of Europe. It is supposed to be indigenous to the countries which bound the Mediterranean Sea, and to the islands situated near those coasts. It was introduced from the south of Europe in the reign of Henry the Eighth. There are several entries respecting artichokes, in the privy-purse expenses of this sovereign. One of them is the following: "Paied to a servant of Maister Tresorer in rewarde for bringing archeocoks to the King's grace, to Yorke place, iijjs. iiijd." A treatise still preserved in the Harleian library, explains "the best settyng and keepynge of artichokes." This was written in the reign of Queen Mary.

The roots of the plant are fleshy and fibrous, producing a head of erect winged leaves. From these rises an upright stem two or three feet high, bearing a roundish flower-head, inclosed by a rigid fence of scales or leaves. These scales are placed in alternate order, one over the other, somewhat resembling the way in which tiles are laid on the roof of a house. It is the immature head of the plant that is used in cookery, before the flowers open. But the flowers themselves are never eaten; indeed they, with the seed-down, having the appearance of bristles, are called the choke, and are removed in order to get at the receptacle or bottom, which is the only part eaten.

Artichokes are frequently introduced in the raw state as salads, both in France and Italy, but they are much more wholesome and agreeable either simply boiled, or stewed in gravy. Artichoke bottoms may be dried in the sun for winter use, forming an agreeable side dish throughout that season. This vegetable possesses little nourishment, and cannot at the present day be regarded as valuable in a medicinal point of view, although it has been spoken of by ancient physicians as a certain cure for jaundice. The flowers of this plant have the property of curdling milk. The eatable portion of the plant is so trifling, compared with the parts that are rejected, that the artichoke will probably always remain among the luxuries of the higher classes, and will not come into general cultivation. Yet the moisture of our climate is so suitable to the plant, that it has greatly improved in size and flavour since its introduction into this country; so much so, that the Italians sent to England for artichoke plants, supposing them to be a different variety from their own. They were, however, soon satisfied that the English plants are identical with their own, for they returned to their original size and flavour as soon as they were again raised in their native soil.

There are two varieties of artichoke in cultivation in our gardens; the Globe, so called from the globular shape of the flower-head; and the French, which is of an oval form. The latter is a hardy and prolific variety, and deserves cultivation; but the globe artichoke is much larger and more fleshy, and has a much finer fla-

vour. This plant is propagated by rooted suckers, which are annually afforded by the parent plants. These are slipped off in March, or early in April, when they are about eight or ten inches in height. They are planted in an open compartment, where the soil is rich and rather moist, and has been well manured. The young plants are set in rows two feet apart, the rows being about four feet distant from each other. Water is given abundantly until they have taken root. No further attention is required, except that of keeping them free from weeds by means of a hoe, which also keeps the surface in a healthy state.

In August and September of the same season, the young plants produce a crop of fruit, and continue bearing until November, at which time the plants receive their winter dressing, which Johnson directs to be as follows. The old leaves being cut away without injuring the shoots, the ground is dug over, and a moderate ridge of mould heaped against each row, close about the plants, but leaving the hearts clear. In severe weather the plants are also covered with long litter, or pea haulm. Stable dung is sometimes put over the plants, before earthing them up; but this is a bad plan, and conduces to their decay. Early in February all covering of this description is removed; and in March, as soon as the shoots are four or five inches above ground, the ridges thrown up in the winter are levelled, and all the earth removed from about the stock to below the part whence the young shoots spring. All of these but two, or at the most three, of the straightest and most vigorous, are then removed, care being taken to leave the finest of those which spring from the under part of the stock, not those which proceed from its crown, and which have hard woody stems; such being productive of indifferent heads. Not only are all superfluous shoots and suckers removed from the stock, but every bud is rubbed off, otherwise more shoots will be produced, and the principal ones injured thereby. After this has been done the mould is returned to the stocks, which are covered with it to the height of two inches above the crown.

In a suitable soil the artichoke is a perennial, yet, after a few years, the heads become smaller and drier; the beds are therefore broken up every four or five years, and fresh ones formed. When the spring-planted artichokes fail to produce heads the first year, the leaves are tied together in autumn, and covered with earth, leaving only the tops visible. Soils in which there is a mixture of some saline or alkaline matter are recommended for the production of this vegetable; for like sea-kale it is naturally a maritime plant. It is stated that artichokes are raised in greater perfection in the Orkneys than elsewhere, and that this successful culture is owing to the plentiful dressing of sea-weed with which the ground is annually supplied.

The tubers of the Jerusalem artichoke are now taken up for preservation in sand. This vegetable is propagated like the potato, by cuttings of the large tubers, in each of which one or two "eyes" are preserved. This is altogether a different plant from the artichoke last described, and has received the same name, merely on account of a resemblance in flavour between its tuberous roots when boiled, and the artichoke bottoms. From its property of turning to the sun the Italians called it *girasole*, or sunflower, which is said to have been corrupted by the English into Jerusalem. The botanical name is *Helianthus*, which also means a sunflower. This root is a native of the Brazils, in South America. It rarely blooms in this country, and the seeds never come to perfection. There is scarcely another culinary vegetable which requires so little culture as this; the smallest offset, when once rooted, will soon multiply into hundreds. There are often from thirty to fifty tubers attached to one stem. It has been justly said that "this root seems to meet

with undue neglect in our gardens, for it is an excellent winter vegetable, which may be grown at very little cost; it is wholesome, nutritious, and savoury; and either boiled or stewed, affords an agreeable variety for the table." The tubers are generally fit for use in September; in November they may be taken up for a winter supply. The Jerusalem artichoke will probably be considered by many persons too watery in its nature to be placed in competition with the potato, which in its tuberous nature it much resembles. Indeed it must be owned that a little of the cook's art is required to make these underground artichokes very savoury. They are therefore frequently boiled till tender, and afterwards peeled and stewed in butter, with a little wine. They were formerly baked in pies, with marrow, dates, ginger, sack, raisins, &c.

Gardeners who are anxious to raise the seed of cabbages free from any mixture of crossing, transplant, at this season, one or two of the best cabbages, setting them into the ground up to the head: these yield abundance of seed the following summer. A few of the soundest and most productive cabbage-stalks, furnished with sprouts, will answer the same end. Some of the best roots of parsnip, carrot, and beet, may also now be transplanted for seed; being set in a convenient spot, apart from the varieties of the species. The roots just mentioned, together with a portion of celery, may also be removed to a dry cellar, or buried in sand for winter use.

At this time we may begin to make provision for the earliest spring crops of peas, by sowing a few drills of the early sorts in a warm sheltered border. These may come in by May or June; though it is of course very uncertain. The mazagan bean may also be sown in a warm border, fully facing the sun. The most certain method, however, is to select a small spot of ground in a good situation, and when the soil has been worked to the proper fineness, to sow the beans within a space that may be covered by a two-light hot-bed frame, in severe weather. In February or March, the crop can be transplanted to the open ground. A sowing may be made of the common taper-rooted radish, for an early crop: the short-topped variety is the best. The bed may be covered with straw to the depth of several inches.

The transplantation of the August-sown cabbages and the earthing up of brocoli, cauliflower, and cabbage plants are continued during the month. Cape brocoli, and autumnal cauliflower, if not already removed to a place of safety, may now be placed in an outhouse immersed in sand to the lower extremities of the flower-stems, where they ramify from the stalk. By such means, these vegetables may be had in the depth of winter.

The effects of frost, from which we are obliged to protect so many of our vegetables, are absolutely useful in improving the flavour of others. Brussels sprouts, for instance, are always the more tender and sweet for being slightly "frosted." Of this well-known vegetable there is but one variety, and that is supposed to have originated from the savoy. It is a great favourite in the town from whence it derives its name, as well as in all parts of Flanders. Van Mons says: "We contrive to supply ourselves in Belgium with this delicious vegetable full ten months in the year, that is, from the end of July to the end of May." Brussels sprouts are so hardy that they will stand twenty degrees of frost, and thus form a valuable winter supply. This plant produces a stem three feet in height, from which shoots out a number of sprouts, having small green heads like diminutive cabbages. The crown of the plant resembles a savoy, and is cut off for use before the rest of the sprouts. A gentleman long resident in Brussels has recommended the following mode of cooking this wholesome vegetable:—After the sprouts have been frosted, gather those that are the most compact, immerse them

in clear soft water for an hour or two; then boil them quickly for about twenty minutes, using plenty of water. When tender, take them up, drain them well, and place them in a stew-pan with cream or with a little fresh butter thickened with flour. Season them with pepper and salt, stir them till thoroughly hot, then serve them up with a little tomato vinegar, which greatly heightens their flavour.

Brussels sprouts are raised from seed sown in March or April; the seedlings being afterwards transplanted out, eighteen inches apart. By about Christmas the sprouts will probably be all cut, when the plant will remain nearly torpid till the advancing sun causes it to start into new vegetation. A little manure added at this time will increase the productiveness of the plants, in which the young heads will soon begin to form again at the axils of the leaves, and will yield a new supply for many weeks in succession. The author of the *English Garden* says of this vegetable:—"The plant that has generally had this name given to it in England, is a thing quite different from the real Brussels sprouts. If you mean to save seed, you must cut off the crown, and let the seed-stems and flowers come out nowhere but from the little cabbages themselves. It is most likely owing to negligence in this respect that we hardly ever see such a thing as real Brussels sprouts in England; and it is said that it is pretty nearly the same in France, the proper care being taken nowhere, apparently, but in the neighbourhood of Brussels."

In conducting the improvements or alterations which may probably be required in the form and arrangement of the kitchen garden, and for which the present is a good season, new paths will doubtless be needed in some quarters. In forming these, if the position be a principal one, there is doubtless nothing so good for the upper surface as gravel. But for outer paths coal ashes form the best material which can be employed as a substitute. Such walks are first to be dug out thoroughly, so that the surface-soil may be employed in deepening the fruit-borders. The foundation may then be made of stones, pebbles, lime-core, semi-vitrified cinders, &c.; these materials being carefully rolled and cemented together, a sufficiently good surface would be produced by three or four inches of coal ashes. Forsyth says, "I give the preference to sea-coal ashes, which, in my opinion, make the best walks for a kitchen garden, and they are easier kept than any others, being firm and dry, and cleaner to walk upon than sand, especially after frost." As an edging to such paths, nothing looks so well or is so easily kept neat and in order, as box. This may be planted as soon as the paths are formed. It must be kept quite perpendicular, and ought to stand, when planted and cut off, about four inches high. The best time for transplanting box is in October; but it may be removed at almost any time, except the height of summer, if it be taken up with a good ball of earth.

Order and neatness being provided for by such operations as the foregoing, little more remains to be done in the kitchen garden during the present month.

THE PRECURSOR OF IMPROVEMENT.

CATTLE may be justly called the pioneers of emigration; they discover the best pasture and water; they also serve to drain the soil in marshes; on the banks of rivers their deep tracks are filled up by each successive flood with alluvial deposit, which, being again trampled down by their footsteps, becomes hard, which raises the banks of the stream so high that they ultimately confine it within its proper bed which is deepened daily until it becomes of sufficient depth to carry off the water: they also improve the quality of both soil and grass.—*Six Years' Residence in Australia.*

He who can take advice is sometimes superior to him who can give it.—*VAN KNIBEL.*